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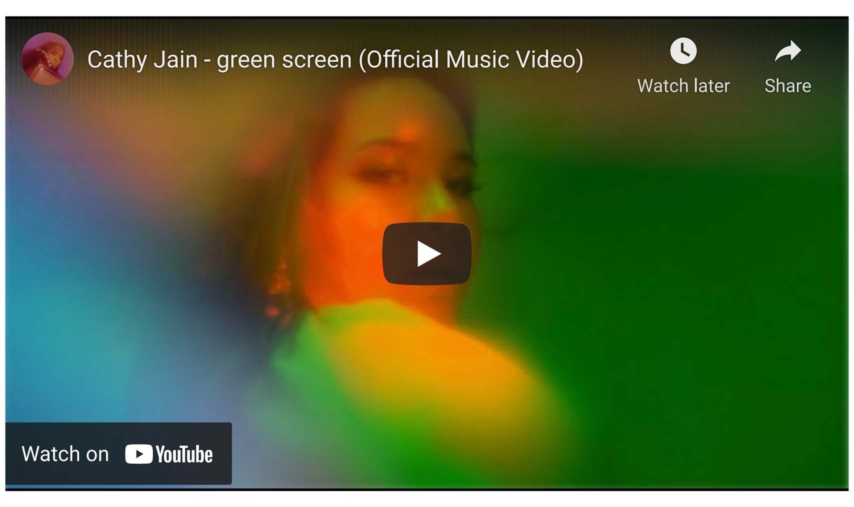
TODAY'S TRACK: CATHY JAIN – 'GREEN SCREEN'

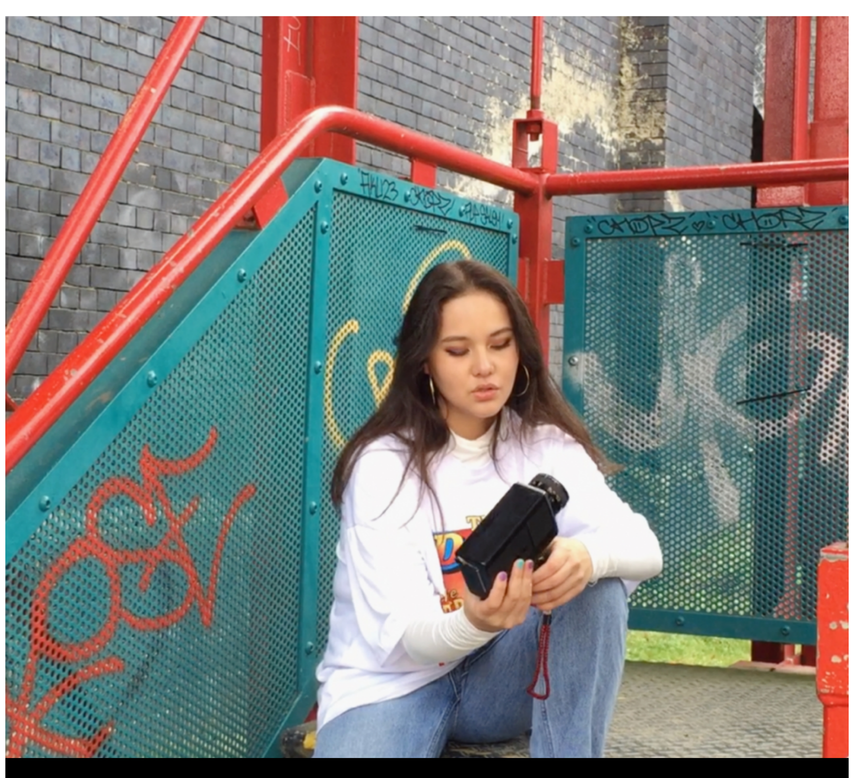
November 1, 2021 — Leave a comment

Pictured: Cover Artwork for 'Artificial' (EP) (Available from November 5, 2021) (via Yala! Records)

Good Morning to you! This is Jacob Braybrooke, and you've arrived at the right time for yet another daily track on the blog, since it's always been my day-to-day pleasure to write up about a different piece of music every day! This is a brand new week and a brand new month, so I've got some brand new music from a brand new artist to mark the occasion of the theme. Cathy Jain is a 17-year-old singer-songwriter who mostly gravitates towards Bedroom Pop and Alternative R&B in terms of her production. She was raised in China and Australia before moving to the UK when she reached the age of 13, and she now finds herself currently based in Wistaton, Cheshire. A recent Brine Leas student, Jain can speak Chinese fluently and, in her time there, she learned how to play the Guzheng, a traditional Zither-like instrument. Jain found her break when she landed a top five place in the BBC Radio 1 Live Lounge Talent Search among more than 10,000 entries, and she will be releasing her debut EP – 'Artificial' – on November 5th via Yala Records. Her fans include BBC Radio 6 Music's Lauren Laverne and Steve Lamacq, and BBC Radio 1 hosts Clara Amfo and Jack Saunders, and she's also gained support from NME, Clash and The Line Of Best Fit. The follow-up to her debut single 'Cool Kid' is 'Green Screen', which was co-produced and co-mixed by her frequent collaborator Rob Heron at the Cracked Analogue studio. So, let's give it a listen below.



Cathy Jain's work has been featured in major playlists across streaming services including Spotify, Apple Music, Amazon Music and Deezer, and when talking about the major themes of her soon-to-be-released EP, she explained in her press release, "Together, the four tracks take a look at how we define what is really 'real' when we spend so much of our time either in our own heads or in a virtual world online". For 'Green Screen', Jain aimed to write a single with a more "epic vibe", and she gradually weaves together several layers of Soulful instrumentation and vocal harmonies to build the recorded track up to create some accessible Alternative Pop with hints of Lo-Fi ambience and mild Psychedelic Rock. Pulling in some Vaporwave and Chillwave influences for a surprisingly laidback opening, she complains, "I'm bored/It's late, the stores are closed and I'd explore my phone I have some more", during the introductory verse. The themes of virtual interaction soon become clearer, with seductive lyrics like "Notes on every sting, making each one sting" and "Things I pretend to have experienced" in later sequences while the electronic textures dabble between blissful Synths and tender, acoustic guitar riffs. Jain refuses to follow the traditional Pop/Rock/Indie single structure of the present day and abandons this pre-conceived idea in favour of switching over to different backdrops to keep things interesting, including a more glitched combination of Keys and Synths aided by some more ballad-like and sing-song vocals in the later part of the single. A few hooks like "Sometimes we just wanna be/Some melodramatic teens in the feels" and "Kissing the green screen/Making me feel things" seem to reoccur now and again, but she places a larger emphasis on sweetly drawled verses and changes of tone plus timbre rather than relying on a typically catchy chorus. The music of the overall package has a back-and-forth pace to it and the harmonies feel a little playful at times, with the attitudes of self-awareness and reflection mixing neatly with the more Dream Pop-inspired backing beats that complement her explorations of exploring a virtual self shared with her colleagues and friends. Overall, 'Green Screen' is an intriguing and alternative Lo-Fi Pop single that may take some less acquired listeners a few listens to wrap their heads around, but I really enjoyed how it subverted my expectations of a teen, emo dream Pop song and she does things differently to her peers. The chilled synths reminded me of Still Woozy, the long-winded romantic croons made me think about La Roux, and her youthful take on the Alternative Soul game feels fresh while appealing for fans of Lorde. One that I'd like to experience outside of my own screens.



Pictured: Cathy Jain in an official publicity shot for her 'Artificial' EP (2021) (Photo courtesy of artist)

That's all for now! Thank you very much for your continued support regarding the blog, and I'll be back tomorrow for an in-depth look at some more brand new material, this time coming from another gifted female solo singer songwriter from Wales who has pulled in an appearance on the site before, although it was covered in the early stages of 2019 and so I would forgive you if you've forgotten all about it. The Carmarthenshire-born artist, who sings in English and Welsh, will issue a new album via Mexican Summer in early 2022. She's toured with St. Vincent and Perfume Genius.

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